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C O N F I D E N T I A L ULAANBAATAR 000341

STATE FOR EAP/CM, PM, AND NEA

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TAGS: PGOV PREL ECON MARR IZ MG

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR MEETS WITH PRESIDENT ENKHBAYAR
DISCUSSES ELECTION RESOLUTION AND 10TH ROTATION IN IRAQ

Classified By: Ambassador Mark C. Minton. Reasons 1.4 (B) and (C)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: The Ambassador called on President Enkhbayar on July 10 to deliver President Bush's national day message (reftel) and to seek President Enkhbayar's views regarding recent political upheaval in Mongolia and the planned duration of Mongolia's 10th troop rotation in Iraq. Enkhbayar stressed the need for the political parties to achieve a solution to the crisis and to follow the election laws. He suggested that he would formally receive the General Election Commission's (GEC) final results of the June 29 parliamentary election on July 14, and he hoped fewer than 19 of the 76 seats would be contested, allowing a new government to be formed with the minimum quorum of 57 MPs present. He noted the Government was not well-prepared for the outbreak of election violence; he had delayed as long as possible his decision to call a state of emergency. Regarding Mongolia's 10th troop rotation in Iraq, Enkhbayar said that he understood the U.S. Government would wish to discuss arrangements under which the Mongolian contingent could remain at Camp Echo, with another partner, after the expected withdrawal of the Poles in October. END SUMMARY.

POLITICAL SOLUTION NEEDED TO ELECTION DILEMMA

¶2. (C) President Enkhbayar said he hoped to avoid two extremes - either calling the election a complete fraud and revoting or insisting that no adjustments could be made. He said election laws should be followed and he had urged the political parties to confer and work together for a resolution of the electoral process. The parties could not make extra constitutional demands of the General Election Commission, but they could submit complaints with documents and materials demonstrating that something was not done correctly. Mistakes could be corrected. However, leaders of different political parties should review all allegations of irregularities, not just those whose correction would help their own parties.

57 OF 76 MPS MUST BE PRESENT TO FORM NEW PARLIAMENT

¶3. (C) On July 14, the GEC, according to the Election Law, should give the official election results to the President, and the President then had fifteen days, or until July 29, to convene the new session of parliament. President Enkhbayar had asked the parties to work together to find a resolution by this time. He said that until issues were resolved, he would do his best to persuade the parties to cooperate. According to the constitution, a minimum initial quorum of 57 members present was required to form a legitimate parliament; Enkhbayar believed that the GEC could submit at least 57 names. Above 57, the 19 remaining seats could remain

disputed, but it was up to the parties to substantiate their claims of fraud.

PERSONAL HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE:
PUT COUNTRY ABOVE POLITICS

¶ 14. (C) President Enkhbayar noted that in 2004 a similar dispute occurred. At that time he was leader of the Mongolian People,s Revolutionary Party (MPRP), and believed there was much fraud during that polling process then as well. He had to decide whether to protest, which would have divided the country, or to accept the results and form the parliament with officials from opposing parties he believed to be &cheaters8. He was not very happy, he said, but thought it best to seek a political solution in forming the parliament rather than divide the country through protests. Now, parties could challenge as many seats as they desired, but they must understand that the country will be stuck, and waging an on-going dispute would prove fruitless and damaging to all interests.

ENKHBAYAR DELAYED CALLING STATE OF EMERGENCY

¶ 15. (C) The President said he delayed declaring a State of Emergency (SOE) until absolutely necessary, and it was the last thing he wanted to do. The Acting Chief of Police was apparently cautious about managing the rioting as it unfolded the night of July 1. But when President Enkhbayar called him at 8pm that evening, with the knowledge that Prime Minister Bayar supported SOE implementation, the Acting Chief of Police advised the President against it, confident that the demonstration would quiet down. Two hours later, however, the official informed the President that he was withdrawing his forces from guarding the MPRP headquarters) because the building destroyed by fire. At that point, Enkhbayar said the he had no choice but to take extraordinary, but prudent action.

POLITICAL PARTIES SELFISH, DODGE RESPONSIBILITY

¶ 16. (C) President Enkhbayar was, he said, ashamed of the political parties, and their failure or inability to deflate the protests and control their followers as the violence mounted. Harsh words among the parties, he thought, should have been saved for later, and not used as incendiaries while the people were demonstrating outside. He said the parties, election committees, and institutions don,t think about responsibility, but only their freedoms) the freedom to throw rocks, to kill, to threaten. But nobody assumes the responsibility for stopping the situation.

GOM NOT PREPARED FOR EMERGENCY;
NO TRADITION OF ACCOMODATION

¶ 17. (C) The President also commented on the lack of a legal framework and its utility during the State of Emergency. For example, the special budget provided in such circumstances required parliament,s approval; yet this parliament quarreled and refused to hold a session, leaving the special budget unendorsed. Enkhbayar commented that perhaps such disputes stem from Mongolia,s nomadic heritage: if neighbors disagree with each other, one family can simply move away. In Europe and America, however, houses are stationary and the fences between neighbors don,t divide people. In Europe and America, the more disagreeing parties engage in dialogue, the more likely they are to produce a better solution and to find common ground. In Mongolia, the more people talk, the deeper are the divisions that separate them.

WOUNDS NEED SALVE NOT SALT; COUNTRY NEEDS SOLUTIONS

¶ 18. (C) President Enkhbayar said recent events had been traumatic for the whole country and society, and that now was

the time to heal - not to put salt on the wounds. He never imagined as President he would have had to declare a State of Emergency. Perhaps U.S. NGOs such as the International Republic Institute (IRI) or the National Democratic Institute (NDI) or other such institutions had suggestions and advice on how to address the political situation. The next elections had to be conducted well and transparently, and parliament and political parties would have to be more responsible. (Note: Province and local elections are tentatively set for October 2008, and the Presidential election is planned for May 2009. End Note.)

NEW GOVERNMENT COULD CONSIDER
FULL 10TH IRAQ TROOP ROTATION

19. (C) With regard to the 10th rotation of Mongolian troops in Iraq protecting Polish forces at Camp Echo, President Enkhbayar noted that he was told by the Foreign and Defense Ministers that, as was agreed in the Mongolian/Polish Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), once the Polish troops withdrew (in mid-October), the Mongolian contingent would withdraw as well. However, after the government was seated and the new cabinet formed, he understood that the U.S. Government would wish to discuss arrangements under which the Mongolian contingent might continue serving at Camp Echo, with a different partner, after the Polish withdrawal and until the end of the tenth rotation. The Ambassador replied that he was sure the U.S. would want to discuss arrangements for such a continuation of the Mongolian deployment.

MINTON